

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method, comprising:
detecting a response, to an interactive advertisement, sent from a client terminal of a customer while the customer is viewing the interactive advertisement within a broadcast segment;
identifying customer information from the detected response;
correlating the identified customer information to merchant information to identify a specific merchant; and
triggering notification of the identified specific merchant to allow ~~communication between the customer and the specific merchant to initiate~~ communication with the customer.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive advertisement is provided to the customer via an interactive video casting system.
3. (original) The method of claim 2 wherein the interactive video casting system comprises an interactive television system.
4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein identifying the customer information from the detected response comprises identification of an identification code corresponding to the client terminal.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising correlating a characteristic associated with the interactive advertisement to the merchant information to enable identification of the specific merchant based on the detected response.
6. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein the characteristic associated with the interactive advertisement comprises one of a channel in which the interactive advertisement was provided, a time in which the interactive advertisement was provided, or a time in which the customer responded to the interactive advertisement.
7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the communication between the specific merchant and the customer is conductable via video conferencing communication.
8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive advertisement is capable of being provided via a telephone, and wherein identifying customer information from the detected response comprises using an audio processing technique to identify words spoken by the customer into the telephone as part of the response.
9. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein triggering notification of the identified specific merchant comprises:

completing a pre-order template including at least some of the identified customer information and the merchant information; and

sending the completed pre-order template to the identified specific merchant prior to an actual order being sent.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein triggering notification of the identified specific merchant comprises sending one of a telephone message, voicemail message, page message, ~~email message~~, instant message, facsimile message, or wireless device message, ~~or web site message~~ to the specific merchant to notify the specific merchant to contact the customer.

11. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein triggering notification of the identified specific merchant to allow communication between the customer and the specific merchant comprises, based on trigger information that specifies an address of the specific merchant that is capable of being sent along with the interactive advertisement, redirecting the client terminal to the address of the merchant specified in the trigger information.

12. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive advertisement is capable of being provided as part of an interactive video casting transmission, the method further comprising sending an indicator displayable along with the interactive advertisement, wherein detecting the response to the interactive advertisement comprises detecting customer activation of the indicator.

13. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising registering a plurality of merchants for interactive advertisements, including obtaining corresponding merchant information from the registered merchants.

14. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein communication between the identified specific merchant and the customer is conductable via one of a telephone, voicemail, page, email, instant message, facsimile, wireless device, video communication, computer linking, or web site.

15. (currently amended) An article of manufacture, comprising:
a machine-readable medium having stored thereon instructions to:
detect a response, to an interactive advertisement, sent from a client terminal of a customer while the customer is viewing the interactive advertisement within a broadcast segment;
identify customer information from the detected response;
correlate the identified customer information to merchant information to identify a specific merchant; and
trigger notification of the identified specific merchant to allow communication between the customer and the specific merchant to initiate communication with the customer.

16. (original) The article of manufacture of claim 15 wherein instructions to identify the customer information from the detected response include instructions stored on the machine-readable medium to identify an identification code corresponding to the client terminal.
17. (currently amended) The article of manufacture of claim 15 wherein the machine-readable medium further includes instructions stored thereon to correlate a characteristic associated with the interactive advertisement to the merchant information to enable identification of the specific merchant based on the detected response.
18. (original) The article of manufacture of claim 15 wherein the interactive advertisement is capable of being provided via a telephone, and wherein the instructions to identify customer information from the detected response comprise audio processing instructions to identify words spoken by the customer into the telephone as part of the response.
19. (currently amended) The article of manufacture of claim 15 wherein the instructions to trigger notification of the identified specific merchant include instructions stored on the machine-readable medium to:
- complete a pre-order template including at least some of the identified customer information and the merchant information; and

send the completed pre-order template to the identified specific merchant prior to an actual order being sent.

20. (original) The article of manufacture of claim 15 wherein the interactive advertisement is capable of being provided as part of an interactive video casting transmission, the machine-readable medium further including instructions stored thereon to send an indicator displayable along with the interactive advertisement, wherein the instructions to detect the response to the interactive advertisement include instructions stored on the machine-readable medium to detect customer activation of the indicator.

21. (original) The article of manufacture of claim 15 wherein the instructions to trigger notification of the identified specific merchant to allow communication between the customer and the specific merchant comprises, based on trigger information that specifies an address of the specific merchant that is capable of being sent along with the interactive advertisement, instructions stored on the machine-readable medium to redirect the client terminal to the address of the merchant specified in the trigger information.

22. (currently amended) A system, comprising:

a server capable to detect a response, to an interactive advertisement, received from a client terminal of a customer, and capable to identify customer information from the detected response;

a storage unit coupled to the server to store customer information and merchant information, the server coupled to access the storage unit to correlate the identified customer information to merchant information stored therein to identify a specific merchant; and

a communication device communicatively coupled to the server to automatically initiate video conferencing ~~communication~~ between the customer and the specific merchant when the response is detected.

23. (canceled).

24. (currently amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the server is capable to complete a pre-order template including at least some of the identified customer information and the merchant information and to send the completed pre-order template to the identified specific merchant via the communication device prior to an actual order being sent.

25. (original) The system of claim 22, further comprising an interactive video casting network coupleable to the server and capable to provide the interactive advertisement to the customer.

26. (currently amended) The system of claim 22, further comprising video equipment at both the customer's location and the merchant's location to facilitate

video ~~conferencing communication~~ to approximate a face-to-face transaction when the response is detected.

27. (currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein registering comprises registering a merchant-preferred method for automatically notifying the specific merchant when the customer response is detected.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein registering a merchant-preferred method for notifying the specific merchant comprises registering a telephone number of the merchant that will be automatically called when the customer response is detected.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein registering a merchant-preferred method for notifying the specific merchant comprises registering a facsimile number of the merchant to which a facsimile will be automatically sent when the customer response is detected.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein registering a merchant-preferred method for notifying the specific merchant comprises registering an e-mail address of the merchant to which an e-mail message will be automatically sent when the customer response is detected.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein registering comprises registering a merchant-preferred category of customers from which to receive responses.

32. (currently amended) The method of claim 31, wherein registering a merchant-preferred category of customers comprises registering a category of customers from a particular geographic area.

33. (currently amended) The method of claim 31, wherein registering a merchant-preferred category of customers comprises registering a category of customers determined to be frequent shoppers of a particular product.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising an initial step of displaying an indicator in connection with the interactive advertisement to indicate that the advertisement is interactive.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the indicator comprises a visual indicator.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the indicator comprises an audio indicator.